

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A cell switch node (20) has a first switch plane (22); a second switch plane (24); a sender switch port interface unit (26_S); and a receiver switch port interface unit (26_R). The sender switch port interface unit sends maintenance cells to the receiver switch port interface unit via the first switch plane and the second switch plane. The maintenance cells are applied to the first switch plane and the second switch plane in a predetermined sequence. The receiver switch port interface unit detects an erroneous switch plane when the maintenance cells from the sender switch port interface unit do not arrive in the predetermined sequence.